

From: Ron Shonkwiler
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/25/02 10:32am
Subject: Microsoft judgement

Dear Judge Kollar-Kotelly,

I want to express my opinion that Microsoft's near monopoly has been harmful to innovation in the computer industry. I would cite these examples, from the past, of companies other than Microsoft who brought great ideas to the computing scene. These companies are in danger of going away under the heel of Microsoft's near monopoly.

To start with, Apple computer brought the mouse/icon oriented graphical user interface (GUI) to the general public in the early 1980's. This was a stunning innovation which opened up computing to the masses.

The Unix community brought networking to the computing public in the early 1980's. Among the public benefits of this is Email and remote printing of documents. Networking comprises of several innovations such as ethernet, the TCP/IP protocol, methods for internet addressing and routing of data. All these and many other networking inventions make for the great world wide connectivity of computing today.

Apple computer brought the innovation of proportional fonts to computing in the middle 1980's. With this, they opening the way to desk top publishing.

MIT brought the idea of X windows to computing, again in the 1980's. The innovation here is the method of combining a GUI with networking. X windows allows any computer, no matter what type, to have a graphical interface. It also allows for remote and distributed graphical computing.

Sun microsystems brought the idea of network file sharing to computing and donated their tested and proven protocol to the computing public. With this innovation, computer programs can be centralized and maintained in a single location.

Wordperfect brought the innovation of word processing software to the public. Wordperfect is now all but gone away. What helped to bring about their demise is that fact the Microsoft had a competing word processing product, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft controlled the operating system on which Wordperfect had to compete. Microsoft is known to have made Wordperfect's software difficult to run on their

operating system.

Sun microsystems brought the innovation of Java programming to the computing scene. This allows for a single version of software to be written that runs on all computers. This marvelous technology also allows actual computer programs to be run on any browser anywhere in the world. This invention has already been instrumental in several fields such as education over the internet. Besides not inventing something like Java, Microsoft actually attempted to destroy it. Fortunately the courts intervened and Java development continues.

Netscape brought the innovation of the internet browser to the general public. I don't need to mention how big and important that has been. Microsoft initially did not appreciate this great invention. I think THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT POINT. We might not still have browsers if it were not for Netscape. In time Microsoft realized their error. Then they attempted to squash Netscape just as they had Wordperfect. That Microsoft was criminal in their attempt to usurp the browser has been proven in court, it is without question.

All these things, and hundreds more, show how much better off we are when thinking people have the freedom to develop their ideas. This could not happen if computing is dominated by one company. A company know more for usurping the creativity of others than for its own inventions.

The proven charges against Microsoft cry out for redress. This company has shown itself to be villainous in the computing community and a detriment to innovation for the good of the pubic. Laws have been broken and appropriate punishment must be meted out. How else to punish a company leveraging its near monopoly in one field to eliminate competing in another than by breaking it up?

In my opinion, I thought the original requirement that Microsoft should be split into the operating system company and the applications company was marginally appropriate. The browser section might also have been split off. I still think that minimally Microsoft should be broken up. This would be beneficial in my opinion for the public.

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